

# **ABSTRACT**

An apparatus for producing an inhomogeneously polarized optical beam from a homogeneously polarized input optical beam includes a first phase shifter, a second phase shifter, and one or more polarization beam splitters. The first  
5 phase shifter shifts at least one portion of a first part of the input optical beam by a first phase. The second phase shifter shifts at least one portion of a second part of the input optical beam by substantially the first phase. The one or more polarization beam splitters split the input optical beam into the first part and the second part and combine the phase shifted portion and substantially all other  
10 portions of the first part of the input optical beam with the phase shifted portion and substantially all other portions of the second part of the input optical beam to produce the inhomogeneously polarized optical beam.